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Letter dated 18 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on Sri Lanka issued on 15 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 116 (b).

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of
Portugal to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 18 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on Sri Lanka issued on 15 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

1. The European Union is deeply concerned about the increasing intensity of the conflict in Sri Lanka and the serious effect this is having on the country, its people and its economy.

2. The European Union calls upon both parties in this tragic, long-running conflict to cease hostilities and begin negotiations with a view to securing a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

3. The European Union reminds both parties of their responsibility to ensure the safety of the civilian population in conflict zones, in particular in the Jaffna Peninsula.

4. The European Union joins the United Nations Secretary-General in urging both parties to cooperate with the Government of Norway in its endeavours to facilitate a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

5. The European Union regrets the restrictions on civil liberties and press freedom under the emergency regulations introduced by the Government of Sri Lanka, and calls on the Government to lift them as soon as possible.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and Iceland and Liechtenstein, European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.